Engaging Business and Other Partners

IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION APPROACHES

On April 18th, 2018, CBLCC (Children's Bureau Learning & Coordination Center) hosted a Digital Dialogue with Melissa T. Merrick, Ph.D., Behavioral Scientist, Division of Violence Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This document summarizes the conversation with the 148 individuals from around the country who joined the call.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

In this Digital Dialogue, Merrick described how the CDC used data from the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study to make a case for businesses to get involved in preventing adversity in childhood. ACEs like child abuse and neglect can negatively impact health and well-being both in childhood and later in life, increasing the likelihood of physical trauma, mental health disorders, chronic disease, and risk behaviors.

ACEs also have an impact on an individual's life potential, a concept that encompasses well-being and preparedness for the workforce. Higher ACE scores correlated with increased barriers to opportunity, such as non-completion of high school, unemployment, and household poverty.[1] Conversely, protective factors such as supportive family environments and social networks can buffer the effects of adverse experiences and promote more positive outcomes.
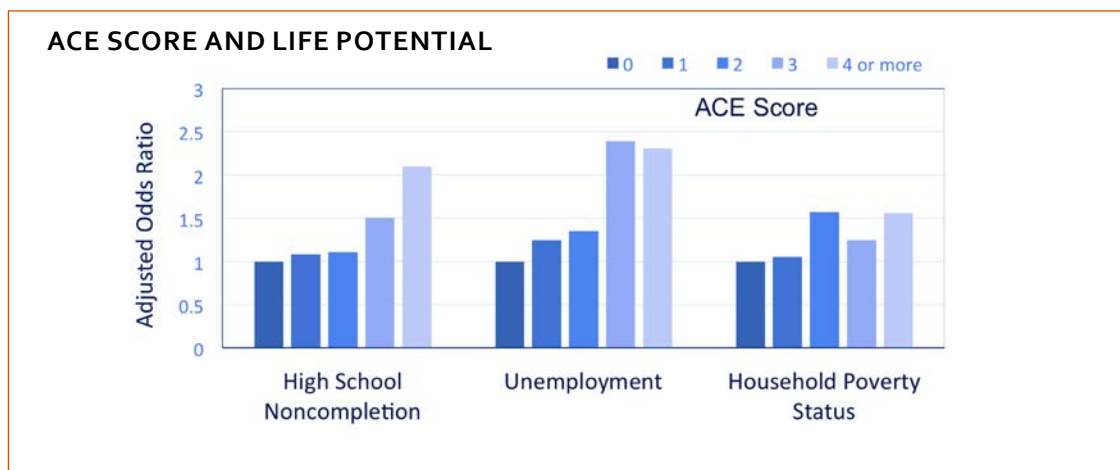
Find Related Resources:

Get the CDC toolkit: Making the Case: Engaging Businesses.

Get the CDC handbook for businesses.

Explore CANTASD's topics.

Stay connected to our ongoing work in this area.

Source: Metzler et al. (2017)

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1   Metzler, M., Merrick, M.T., Klevens, J., Ports, K.A., & Ford, D.C. (2017). Adverse childhood experiences and life opportunities: Shifting the narrative. *Children and Youth Services Review, 72,* 141-149.

THE ROLE OF BUSINESS

Businesses can serve as key partners in child maltreatment prevention efforts by promoting the well-being of employees and their families. Preventing early adversity produces positive outcomes in three areas that business leaders value most, according to feedback CDC has received from the business community: (1) protecting the company's return on investment, (2) ensuring a well-prepared workforce, and (3) avoiding the costs of remediating negative outcomes.

CDC's toolkit for employers, Boost Your Competitive Edge: Actions for a Healthy, Productive Workforce, encourages businesses to take steps to reduce their employees' stress and promote healthy home environments for their families. Some strategies that businesses can use include the following:

- Model safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments in your organization.
- Create a family-friendly workplace.
- Take a comprehensive approach to employee wellness.
- Provide parenting resources for employees.
- Consider the role of state and local policy in improving employees' and their children's access to safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments.

To help child and family-serving professionals engage businesses as child maltreatment prevention partners, CDC developed Making the Case: Engaging Business. This online resource demonstrates that professionals can draw upon the skills they already use very day to connect with local businesses and other organizations.

Question and Answer

Participants had a number of questions for Dr. Merrick that prompted further discussion. Questions and Dr. Merrick's responses are summarized below.

Please note that the views expressed in this document are those of the presenter and participants and do not represent the official views of, or endorsement by, the Children's Bureau, ACYF, ACF, HHS.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention

WHAT IS THE "BIG VISION" FOR ENGAGING MORE PARTNERS IN PREVENTING EARLY ADVERSITY?

Merrick: We cannot do this work alone—public health cannot, social services cannot, and government cannot. We need the help of all of these partners and many, many more. We want to engage new partners in this work because we know that together we can truly prevent early adversity. For example, we are starting to work with law enforcement around being trauma-informed about the linkage between ACEs and the opioid epidemic. We're also engaging with housing, non-governmental organizations, and philanthropy.

WHAT RESOURCES OR TOOLKITS DOES THE CDC HAVE FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN THIS EFFORT?

Merrick: People who are interested in this effort should go to our recently updated ACE website to find all the primary research articles. More than 40 states have collected ACE data on the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey System from 2009 to the present. The vetoviolence.cdc.gov platform has more interactive resources. Specific business resources such as Boost Your Competitive Edge and Making the Case are located on the website, as well as an ACE Snapshot that highlights primary prevention efforts. The entire suite of violence prevention technical packages are located on the injury center page. Colorado Essentials in partnership with Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC) has a wonderful Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit.

Table 1. Toolkits for Workplaces

Resource	Description
Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit	The Family-Friendly Workplace Toolkit was developed by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment through Essentials for Childhood in partnership with Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC). The toolkit provides evidence-based, best practice examples of policies and approaches that can create a more family-friendly workplace.
Family-Friendly Workplace Assessment	Health Links and EPIC have established a key partnership in Colorado to connect businesses to each other and to resources that will help employees thrive at home, in the workplace, and in their communities.
Paid Family Leave Advocacy Toolkit	National advocacy organization ZERO TO THREE developed a toolkit for advocates to take action on paid family leave issues. It includes a fact sheet, digital images, talking points, and a sample op-ed.

ARE THERE TOOLKITS TO GET LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVED?

Merrick: Law enforcement agencies are important partners, and we are working every day to get these messages out to them. We are giving talks and helping to develop their awareness and commitment to this topic.

HAS THE CDC BEEN ABLE TO ENCOURAGE LARGE, NATIONWIDE BUSINESSES TO IMPLEMENT THESE STRATEGIES?

Merrick: We have talked to a national hardware retail chain and other big businesses to explore how they understand their role in these kinds of prevention efforts. If you visit the Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC) toolkit, you can see specific strategies that businesses have implemented in this space. I will say that there is a resounding interest from them.

HOW DO YOU ENGAGE HOMELESS FAMILIES AND YOUTH EXITING THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM?

Merrick: Many efforts to engage youth and other populations to develop resiliency and healing are occur-ring in communities around the country. Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities (MARC) is located in 13 communities in the United States, and it is managed by the Health Federation of Philadelphia with Robert Wood Johnson funding. MARC is about incorporating all segments of a community and recognizing what the strengths of the community are. On the MARC website, you can search its many resources and find potential ideas for programs.

Additional Resources:

- CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control web site
- CDC Division of Violence Prevention's ACE Study web site
- Boost Your Competitive Edge: Actions for a Healthy, Productive Workforce
- Making the Case: Engaging Businesses
- Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: A Technical Package for Policy, Norms and Programmatic Activities

DO YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVES ON THESE QUESTIONS WITH US? JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA: FACEBOOK: FACEBOOK.COM/CBLCCACF X: X.COM/CBLCC_ACF

CDC's Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Initiatives

ESSENTIALS FOR CHILDHOOD

The power of positive childhood experiences and protective factors provides the basis for CDC's Essentials for Childhood framework. Essentials is rooted in a public health approach, addressing ACEs like child abuse and neglect as root causes of poor health outcomes. Essentials focuses on the importance of ensuring that all children have access to safe, stable and nurturing relationships.

Thirty-nine states have Essentials for Childhood programs. The majority of these are self-supported, meaning that they receive no funding from CDC (see sidebar). During this discussion, we asked the participants how connected they were to Essentials work going on in their states. Interestingly, over two-thirds of poll respondents said they were not aware of Essentials work going on in their state or community.

The Essentials for Childhood framework has four action areas:

1. Raise awareness and commitment.
2. Use data to inform action.
3. Create the context for healthy children and families through norms change and programs.
4. Create the context for healthy children and families through policies.

Essentials for Childhood Funded States:

California, Colorado, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Washington

Essentials for Childhood Self-Supported States:

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming

Please note: These states have had varying levels of involvement with some being fully involved throughout the Essentials for Childhood initiative and others with more limited participation.

When used together, these actions can lead to greater prevention impact. Essentials for Childhood states use a collective impact process to engage partners and stakeholders from multiple sectors to align efforts around this vision and implement strategies with the greatest potential for preventing child abuse and neglect.

CORE STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Supporting the third and fourth goals of the Essentials for Childhood Framework, CDC's technical package on child abuse and neglect prevention articulates five evidence-based core strategies:

1. Change social norms to support parents and positive parenting.
2. Enhance parenting skills to promote healthy child development.
3. Strengthen economic supports for families.
4. Provide quality care and education early in life.
5. Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention

The technical package offers specific approaches that states and communities can use to create the context for healthy children and families and prevent child maltreatment.